

**THE FESTIVE OPENING OF THE CERNAVODĂ BRIDGE IN THE  
LIGHT OF THE ROYAL CORRESPONDENCE****INAUGURAREA PODULUI DE LA CERNAVODĂ ILUSTRATĂ ÎN  
CORESPONDENȚA REGALĂ**

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**Rezumat**

La data de 14/26 septembrie 1895 a fost inaugurat podul „Regele Carol I”, în prezența regelui Carol I al României, a familiei regale, a guvernului, a membrilor Parlamentului etc. Podul unește malul muntenesc al Dunării cu cel dobrogean. Monumentul ingineresc este amplasat la 1 km de orașul Cernavodă (jud. Constanța), iar autorul său este ing. Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). În studiul de față prezentăm evenimentele care au avut loc în momentul inaugurării podului, așa cum sunt ele descrise într-un număr de douăsprezece scrisori și o telegramă, dar și de două ziare românești, respectiv „Monitorul Oficial” și „Constituționalul”. Scrisorile au fost redactate de regele Carol I și de principesa moștenitoare Marie (viitoarea regină Maria a României), amândoi martori ai evenimentului istoric.

**Keywords:** the “King Carol I” Bridge, Danube, Dobrudja, Carol I, Queen Marie.

“[...] the bold iron arches rise like gigantic wings in a solemn attempt to fly [...]”<sup>1</sup>.

On 14/26 September 1895 was inaugurated, with great pomp, the “King Carol I” bridge (Cernavodă, Constanța County)<sup>2</sup>. This bridge, which is practically a memorable milestone of the 19<sup>th</sup> century’s civil engineering, unites the two shores of the Lower Danube. (Figs. 1-5)

The bridge was built to ensure the railway connection between Bucharest and Constanța. The distance between the Dobrudjan portal and the town of Cernavodă is 1 km.

The inauguration was attended by King Carol I (or Charles I) of Romania, Queen Elisabeth, and the then Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Romania<sup>3</sup>, PM

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<sup>1</sup> Al. Vlahuță, *România pitorească*, Bucharest, 1967, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Today “Anghel Saligny” Bridge; <https://structurae.net/structures/anghel-saligny-bridge>

<sup>3</sup> Later King Ferdinand I and Queen Marie.

Lascăr Catargiu and his government<sup>4</sup>, Parliamentarians, members of the clergy, some Royal foreign guests<sup>5</sup>, and many other officials. Also, there was present a vast crowd of population from Bucharest, Constanța, Brăila, Galați, Călărași, Râmnicu-Sărat, and Buzău.

Before starting the bridge's design, Eng. A. Saligny made a short visit to the shipyard of the Forth Bridge (in Scotland), and had meaningful talks with Sir John Fowler and Benjamin Baker, the engineers who designed and built it<sup>6</sup>. On 1 December 1889, A. Saligny and his team finished the design, and on 3/15 January 1890 took place an auction that was won by the Fives-Lille Company<sup>7</sup>. A total of six companies competed<sup>8</sup>. Later that same year, on 9/21 October 1890, the construction started<sup>9</sup>. The construction was completed after five years.

The Fetești-Cernavodă railway starts at the Fetești railway station, crosses over the Borcea Branch, the Iezer Pond<sup>10</sup>, and then crosses the Danube, joining the Cernavodă-Constanța railway<sup>11</sup>.

The total cost of this impressive work was of 35.000.000 lei (namely the "Carol I" Bridge, the Bridge over the Danube's Borcea Branch<sup>12</sup>, and viaducts)<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Prime Minister was Lascăr Catargiu (1823-1899).

<sup>5</sup> Princess Charlotte and Prince Bernhard III of Saxe-Meiningen, their daughter, Feodora, Princes Leopold and Wilhelm of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, see *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, text setting, German translation, introductory word, and notes by Vasile Docea, Iași, 2020, p. 233.

<sup>6</sup> D. Iordănescu, C. Georgescu, *Construcții pentru transporturi în România. 1881-1981*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 1986, p. 378; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, University of Bucharest, PhD thesis, 2006, (ms), p. 60; N. Șt. Noica, *Lucrări publice din vremea lui Carol I. Acte de fundare și medalii comemorative*, Bucharest, 2008, p. 25-26; N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Cîtorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 108.

<sup>7</sup> D. Iordănescu, C. Georgescu, *Construcții pentru transporturi în România. 1881-1981*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 1986, p. 379; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 69.

<sup>8</sup> *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. II, 1888-1892, text setting, German translation, introductory word, and notes by Vasile Docea, Iași, 2014, p. 157 (who shortly wrote in his diary "Fives-Lille the lowest price 7,500,000 Francs").

<sup>9</sup> D. Iordănescu, C. Georgescu, *Construcții pentru transporturi în România. 1881-1981*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 1986, p. 379; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 66-69.

<sup>10</sup> An island between the Danube and the Borcea Branch.

<sup>11</sup> C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 70.

<sup>12</sup> <https://structurae.net/en/structures/bridge-over-the-danube-s-borcea-branch>; the contractor was the company of Schneider et Cie. The bridge over the Borcea Branch was finished in January 1895, C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 70.

<sup>13</sup> G. C. Măinescu, *Evoluția căilor ferate în Dobrogea de la 1877 până în zilele noastre, din punct de vedere constructiv*, în „Cincizeci de ani de viață românească”, sub egida „Analele

At both ends of the bridge were built two portals recalling medieval turrets<sup>14</sup>. Both portals had inscriptions with the title “King Carol I Bridge”. Only at the entrance from Cernavodă, above the vault, could be read the additional inscription “Made under the rule of the King Carol I. 1890-1895”.

The bronze medallions<sup>15</sup> of Carol I and Elisabeth, made by Constantin Wladimir Hegel (1838-1918)<sup>16</sup>, wrapped up in branches of laurel and flowers, were fixed on the left and on the right of the vault in Fetești. Currently, only the perforations where the busts were fixed on the Fetești portal are visible. On the Cernavodă portal there are displayed two over-life-sized bronze statues representing Romanian infantry men<sup>17</sup>, cast by the French sculptor Léon Pillet (1840-1916)<sup>18</sup>.

#### The technical details of the bridge.

**Beginning of works:** 21 October 1890; **Completion:** 24 September 1895; **Status:** out of service; **Structure:** Through truss bridge. Cantilever truss bridge; **Function/usage:** Railroad (railway) bridge; **Material:** steel; **Technical information:** **Total length:** 1661.900 m; **Materials:** steel; **Designer:** Anghel Saligny; **Contractor:** Fives-Lille<sup>19</sup>. The bridge is provided with a single track railway line<sup>20</sup>. The bridge is enlisted in the Heritage list of the historical monuments<sup>21</sup>.

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Dobrogei”, anul IX, vol. I, Constanța, 2003, p. 433; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 296; N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Cîitorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 117; the amount of 35,000,000 lei means today 139,035,409.33 euro, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/2417794>.

<sup>14</sup> C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 71.

<sup>15</sup> L’Illustration, Journal Universel, no. 2746, 12 October 1895, p. 402; N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Cîitorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 119.

<sup>16</sup> See M. Deac, *50 de ani de sculptură (1890-1940)*, Bucharest, 2000, p. 18-19.

<sup>17</sup> About this infantry category of the Romanian national army (the so-called ‘Dorobanți’), see C. I. Scafeș, H. Vl. Șerbănescu, C. M. Andonie, I. I. Scafeș, *Armata română în războiul de independență. 1877-1878*, Bucharest, 2002, p. 159-165.

<sup>18</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 Septembrie 1895, p. 2; E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs de tous les temps et de tous le pays par un groupe d’écrivains spécialistes française et étrangers*, vol. 10, Paris, 1999, p. 931; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 72; N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Cîitorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 120.

<sup>19</sup> <https://structurae.net/en/structures/anghel-saligny-bridge>; for further technical details, see D. Iordănescu, C. Georgescu, *Construcții pentru transporturi în România. 1881-1981*, vol. 1, Bucharest, 1986, p. 379-385; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 61-65.

<sup>20</sup> C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 65.

<sup>21</sup> <https://patrimoniul.gov.ro/images/lmi-2015/LMI-CT.pdf>, CT-II-m-A-02872.

In the collection of the Polytechnic University Museum (Bucharest) is stored the “Starke & Rommerer” theodolite, 4930 series, used by Eng. Saligny and his team to build the bridge<sup>22</sup>. (Fig. 6)

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The chosen moment for the festive opening was delayed due to the massive rains and the Danube’s overflowing in April 1895, which caused a pause in construction works for a period of time<sup>23</sup>. Finally, all the obstacles being overcome, on 10 August 1895 Carol I sent a coded telegram to Lascăr Catargiu in which he announced the latest details about the festive opening day<sup>24</sup>.

The celebration’s extended chronicles were published in the Romanian newspapers. The periodicals chosen to be presented here are ‘Monitorul Oficial’ (“The Official Gazette of Romania”) and “Constituționalul”. But the main frame of our presentation is formed by twelve letters and one telegram, wrote by the king Carol I of Romania and the then Crown Princess Marie.

The festive opening took place on 14/26 September 1895 with great pomp and solemnity. Three so-called “pleasure trains” departed from Bucharest North railway station to Fetești – Cernavodă. The railway’s ticket counters and those in the city released over 20,000 tickets<sup>25</sup>.

Others ‘pleasure trains’ departed from Galați, Brăila, Râmnicu-Sărat, Buzău, Călărași, and Constanța<sup>26</sup>.

One train of guests departed from Bucharest North railway station. It had 27 cars and two locomotives. On it there embarked the members of the diplomatic corps, those of the clergy, the State high officials, the engineer corps, and the mass media.

On the way the railway stations were beautifully adorned with flowers, garlands and Romanian traditional rugs. A significant number of peasants from the surroundings came to the event.

The guests arrived at Fetești, and advanced on the bridge on its last abutment from the left shore.

The Royal train left Sinaia at 7 am, on board being Carol I, Queen Elisabeth, Crown Prince Ferdinand, Crown Princess Marie, Prince Leopold, Prince Wilhelm,

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<sup>22</sup> <https://ordineazilei.ro/the-tourist-fond-of-science-and-technology-discovering-the-engineering-school/>.

<sup>23</sup> *Scrisorile regelui Carol I din arhiva de la Sigmaringen (1878-1905)*, introductory study, translation, adaptation, and notes by Sorin Cristescu, Bucharest, 2012, p. 333, letter no. 194, to Prince Leopold; *Calendarul pentru toți românii pe anul 1896*, year XXI, Bucharest, p. 148.

<sup>24</sup> C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 77.

<sup>25</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 1. For the troubles with the overcrowded trains, see *Calendarul pentru toți românii pe anul 1896*, year XXI, Bucharest, p. 148-149.

<sup>26</sup> “Calendarul pentru toți românii pe anul 1896”, year XXI, Bucharest, p. 148; N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Ctitorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 117.

the family of Saxe-Meiningen. The Royal train has attached all the cars. At Băneasa railway station is attached the ministers' car<sup>27</sup>. The Royal train, driven by Gh. I. Duca<sup>28</sup>, arrived at Fetești at 12. Over 30,000 people enthusiastically greeted the Romanian Royal Family, accompanied by its guests. Eng. Saligny, the project's author, greeted the King and Queen of Romania<sup>29</sup>. From here, Carol I and his retinue, led by Constantin Olănescu, the minister of Public Works, and Gh. I. Duca, the manager of the Romanian Railways, walked on the bridge to the last abutment. Carol and the Royals met the engineer corps and the other guests<sup>30</sup>.

Carol I describe the moment: "At 1 pm arrived on the wonderful and terrific bridge over the Danube"<sup>31</sup>. The last rivet<sup>32</sup> (made in silver)<sup>33</sup> was driving in by Carol I who set in motion the hydraulic riveting machine. Afterward, the Royals, the dignitaries and the guests stepped forward up to the Dobrudjan shore, where at the exit of the bridge, they met the prefect of Constanța County, and the mayor of Cernavodă which offered the traditional bread and salt<sup>34</sup>.

After this moment, the Royals, their guests, the diplomatic corps, the ministers, and the presidents of the Parliament took a seat in a pavilion. Then Constantin Olănescu read the document which was to be set in masonry, signed by Carol I, Elisabeth, Ferdinand, Marie, the Metropolitan Primate, the Bishop of the Lower Danube<sup>35</sup>, and ministers<sup>36</sup>.

The document was then built in the pillar on the right shore. When placing the document in the pillar, D. T. Maiorescu, the president of the Railway Administration Board, handed the masonry trowel to Carol I<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, p. 233; "Constituționalul", 16/28 September 1895, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4474; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 80.

<sup>29</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4474.

<sup>30</sup> "Constituționalul", 16/28 September 1895, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, p. 233.

<sup>32</sup> C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 82, the rivet was imprinted with the emblem of the Romanian kingdom, the king's initials, and the year of 1895.

<sup>33</sup> See N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Cîtorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 106.

<sup>34</sup> "Constituționalul", 16/28 September 1895, p. 3; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 81.

<sup>35</sup> About the life & work of Partenie Clinceni, see A. Constantinescu (deacon), *Monografia Sfintei Episcopii a „Dunărei de Jos” alcătuită la plinirea a 40 de ani de domnie a M. S. Carol I, regele României*, Bucharest, 1906, p. 157-169.

<sup>36</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4474; *Regele Carol I al României, Cuvântări și scrisori*, vol. III, 1887-1909, Bucharest, 1909, p. 235-236; See Appendix no. 1.

<sup>37</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4476.

Above this document, a bronze plaque was cast on which were inscribed, with golden letters, the names of all prime-ministers and ministers of Public Works from 1890 to 1895, and that of the designer<sup>38</sup>. Hereafter, Ghenadie Petrescu<sup>39</sup>, the Metropolitan Primate of the Romanian Orthodox Church, officiated *Te Deum*. Subsequently, the Royal family and the ministers pounded by turn a last blow of hammer<sup>40</sup>.

The retinue sat in a tribune to assist at the try-out of the bridge. A number of 15 locomotives, adorned with flags and garlands, crossed the bridge with 80 km/h, starting from Fetești. Their entrance on the bridge was greeted by gun salutes and whistles of the ships moored in the port<sup>41</sup>. To conclude the resistance tests, a passenger train with a speed of 100 km/h crossed the bridge in the sound of the locomotive's whistles<sup>42</sup>. All this time, Saligny and other builders are in a boat, under the bridge, thus guaranteeing the resistance of the work<sup>43</sup>.

Carol I offered medals, such as the order of the „Crown of Romania”<sup>44</sup>, and the medal of “Faithful service”<sup>45</sup>, to the engineers and gaugers. A. Saligny and Gh. I. Duca received the National Order of the “Star of Romania”<sup>46</sup>.

Subsequently, the Royals boarded the train in order to cross the bridge<sup>47</sup>. At 4 pm there started the banquet to which over 400 people took part<sup>48</sup>. In the station

<sup>38</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 2; N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Cîitorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 118; See Appendix no. 2.

<sup>39</sup> See Baba-Novak (M. Lugomirescu), *Judecata și judecătorii mitropolitului primat Ghenadie*, Bucharest, 1898, p. 11-18.

<sup>40</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4476.

<sup>41</sup> *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, p. 233; MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4476.

<sup>42</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Cîitorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 118.

<sup>44</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 1; T. Al. Martin, K. Pârvan, C. Opaschi, *Onoarea Națiunilor*, vol. II, *Ordine și decorații românești din patrimoniul Muzeului Național de Istorie a României*, Bucharest, 2016, p. 76, established in 1881, occasioned by the announcement of the new kingdom. It was meant to reward the services brought to the Romanian state.

<sup>45</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 1; T. Al. Martin, K. Pârvan, C. Opaschi, *Onoarea Națiunilor*, vol. II, *Ordine și decorații românești din patrimoniul Muzeului Național de Istorie a României*, Bucharest, 2016, p. 73, established in 1878, as a reward for the services to the State, made by civilians and armed forces.

<sup>46</sup> C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 306; T. Al. Martin, K. Pârvan, C. Opaschi, *Onoarea Națiunilor*, vol. II, *Ordine și decorații românești din patrimoniul Muzeului Național de Istorie a României*, Bucharest, 2016, p. 43, established on 10 May 1877, it was the first Order officially granted by the Romanian state. It was offered as a reward for the services to the State, made by civilians and armed forces alike.

<sup>47</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 1.

building was organised the banquet for the King and his guests<sup>49</sup>. In total twelve tables were displayed. Three of them were independently honored by Carol I, Elisabeth, and Marie. Each guests found beside their cutlery a bronze commemorative medal<sup>50</sup> (author: Anton Scharff<sup>51</sup>), and a photo of the bridge<sup>52</sup>. (Fig. 7a-b)

During the banquet, Olănescu<sup>53</sup>, Duca<sup>54</sup> and Carol I<sup>55</sup> delivered their speeches.

In the collections of the National History Museum of Romania is stored the menu offered at the banquet (made by Mütznner Printing House)<sup>56</sup>. Richly dishes were served for the joyous congregation, as we can see in the menu chosen to conclude the happy gathering: caviar frais, consommé de volailles, bouchées à la Reine, saumon glacé à la Régence, filet de boeuf à la Royale, choudfroid de cailles en caisses, punch à la Romaine, poulardes du Mans truffées, salade à la Russe, asperges sauce hollandaise, glaces, gâteaux à la Princesse, fromages, fruits. The selected wines were of high class: Sherry, Johannisberg Cabinet, Clos de Vougeot, Sauternes, Château Yquem, Mouton Rothschild, Pommery sec<sup>57</sup>. (Fig. 8)

The dinner was cooked by the renowned Bucharest restaurants Capșa and Continental; the menu cost 50,000 lei<sup>58</sup>.

The French journalist Païano who was the envoy for “L’Illustration, Journal Universel” wrote about the festivities and mentioned that the Romanian journalists offered a banquet “plein d’entrain et de cordialité” to their foreign fellows<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>48</sup> *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, p. 233; MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4476.

<sup>49</sup> C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 88.

<sup>50</sup> See C. Tănăsioiu, *Iconografia regelui Carol I. De la realitate la mit*, Timișoara, 1999, p. 31; C. Tănăsioiu, *Iconografia familiei regale a României. Reprezentare și propagandă*, University of Bucharest, PhD thesis, 2005, (ms), p. 76; *România în timpul lui Carol I. 1866-1914/Romania during the Reign of Carol I. 1866-1914*, Bucharest, 2006, exhibition catalogue, editors: Mariana Neaguțu, Radu Coroamă, p. 246, no. 213.

<sup>51</sup> About the medalist, see [http://medallicartcollector.com/anton-scharff\\_biography.html](http://medallicartcollector.com/anton-scharff_biography.html)

<sup>52</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 1; C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 88.

<sup>53</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4476-4477.

<sup>54</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4477 (in which mentioned that the metallic structure weighed 5,000.000 kg.

<sup>55</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4477-4478; *Regele Carol I al României, Cuvântări și scrisori*, vol. III, 1887-1909, Bucharest, 1909, p. 236-238; See Appendix no. 3.

<sup>56</sup> NHMR, inv. no. 142194.

<sup>57</sup> N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Cîitorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 119.

<sup>58</sup> C. Fudulu, *Anghel Saligny (1854-1925). Aspecte din activitatea sa*, p. 89; today means about 198,000 euro (<https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/2417794>).

<sup>59</sup> ‘L’Illustration, Journal Universel’, no. 2746, 12 October 1895, p. 402.

After the conclusion of the banquet, the Royals boarded the gunboat “Grivița”, and enjoyed a visit beneath the bridge<sup>60</sup>. The glorious event concluded with fireworks<sup>61</sup>. When nightfall came, Carol I and his Royal retinue slept on the ship “RMS Meteor”<sup>62</sup>. The next morning they left for Constanța<sup>63</sup>.

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In the rows below we are going to present fragments of the twelve letters and one telegram, chronologically listed, written by the King Carol I of Romania<sup>64</sup>, respectively Crown Princess Marie of Romania (later Queen Marie)<sup>65</sup>. The documents are stored in the fund archive of the National Archives of Romania in Bucharest and the State Archives of Sigmaringen (Germany).

Carol I wrote, describing the festive opening, to his mother, Princess Josephine of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen<sup>66</sup>, and to his siblings, Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern - Sigmaringen<sup>67</sup>, Countess Marie of Flanders<sup>68</sup>, and Prince Frederick of Hohenzollern - Sigmaringen<sup>69</sup>, but also to the then Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Romania<sup>70</sup>. On the other hand, the young Crown Princess depicted the festive opening in a few words in three letters, written to her mother, Marie Alexandrovna, Grand Duchess of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha<sup>71</sup>, a longtime confidante of her eldest daughter.

#### a) King Carol I.

##### Telegram, no. 01.

“[...] I am going to lay the first stone of the first pylon of the great bridge over the Danube”<sup>72</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, p. 233; MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4478.

<sup>61</sup> *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, p. 233.

<sup>62</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 2; on the contrary, MO, no. 137, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4478, mentions other ship names, “Orient” and “Prince Carol”. Carol I in his diary mentions Monopol, Orient and Prince Carol, *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, p. 233.

<sup>63</sup> “Constituționalul”, 16/28 September 1895, p. 1-2; N. D. Ion, D. Păuleanu, *Regele Carol I. Ctitorul României moderne*, vol. II, Sinaia, 2019, p. 120.

<sup>64</sup> (1839-1914); <http://www.almanachdegotha.org/id32.html>

<sup>65</sup> (1875-1938); <http://www.almanachdegotha.org/id55.html>, 2d.

<sup>66</sup> (1813-1900); <http://www.almanachdegotha.org/id4.html>, 2e.

<sup>67</sup> (1835-1905); <http://www.almanachdegotha.org/id49.html>, 1b.

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.almanachdegotha.org/id49.html>, 6b.

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.almanachdegotha.org/id49.html>, 5b.

<sup>70</sup> Future King Ferdinand and Queen Marie of Romania.

<sup>71</sup> (1853-1920); <http://www.almanachdegotha.org/id301.html>, 6g.

<sup>72</sup> *Scrisorile regelui Carol I din arhiva de la Sigmaringen (1878-1905)*, introductory study, translation, adaptation, and notes by Sorin Cristescu, Bucharest, 2012, p. 192, telegram, 21 October 1890, to Prince Leopold. “[...] eu pun piatra fundamentală la cel dintâi pylon al marelui pod peste Dunăre”.

**Letter no. 02.**

‘In summer, I will have the official opening of the great bridge over the Danube that made me postpone my trip abroad’<sup>73</sup>.

**Letter no. 03.**

‘‘The official opening of the great bridge over the Danube [of Cernavodă] is about to take place in July but because of the water rises the works have momentarily stopped. It is still hopeful that they will be ready in time’’<sup>74</sup>.

**Letter no. 04.**

‘‘In July is going to take place the solemn official opening of our great bridge over the Danube, which is a very important event for both the country and me, given that for 23 years I’ve worked and I’ve fought for my ardent wish. With the bridge open, our ships will be able to make regular journeys on the route from Constanța to Constantinople’’<sup>75</sup>.

**Letter no. 05.**

‘‘The official opening of the bridge over the Danube can’t happen in September. Missy will enjoy it. The bridge is practically finished. But the structures on the island suffered unfortunate disturbances’’<sup>76</sup>.

**Letter no. 06.**

‘‘The bridge over the Danube is nearing completion, it will be festively inaugurated in the second part of September and I’m glad that you will be able to attend this beautiful ceremony’’<sup>77</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> S. Cristescu, *Carol I. Corespondența personală (1878-1912)*, Bucharest, 2005, p. 350, letter no. 231, 16/28 April 1895, to Prince Frederick. ‘‘La vară voi avea și inaugurarea marelui pod peste Dunăre care a făcut să-mi amân călătoria în străinătate’’.

<sup>74</sup> *Scrisorile regelui Carol I din arhiva de la Sigmaringen (1878-1905)*, introductory study, translation, adaptation, and notes by Sorin Cristescu, Bucharest, 2012, p. 333, letter no. 194, 18/30 April 1895, to Prince Leopold. ‘‘În iulie urmează să aibă loc inaugurarea marelui pod peste Dunăre [de la Cernavodă], numai că apele crescute au determinat momentan oprirea lucrărilor. Se speră totuși că vor fi gata la timp’’.

<sup>75</sup> *Scrisorile regelui Carol I din arhiva de la Sigmaringen (1878-1905)*, introductory study, translation, adaptation, and notes by Sorin Cristescu, Bucharest, 2012, p. 335, letter no. 195, 3/15 May 1895, to Princess Josephine. ‘‘În iulie urmează să aibă loc inaugurarea solemnă a marelui nostru pod peste Dunăre care este un eveniment foarte important și pentru țară și pentru mine căci 23 de ani am muncit și m-am luptat pentru dorința mea cea mai arzătoare. Odată cu deschiderea podului, navele noastre vor putea face curse regulate pe ruta Constanța-Constantinopol’’.

<sup>76</sup> S. Cristescu, *Carol I. Corespondența personală (1878-1912)*, Bucharest, 2005, p. 351, letter no. 232, 2/14 June 1895, to King Ferdinand of Romania. ‘‘Inaugurarea podului peste Dunăre nu poate avea loc în septembrie. Missy o să se bucure. Podul este practic terminat. Dar construcțiile de pe insulă au suferit perturbări regretabile’’.

**Letter no. 07.**

“Without toil and labor, there is no reward and no satisfaction, and they have been granted me in full at the opening of the bridge over the Danube which today ascends as a symbol of a blessed reign of 30 years. Overwhelming is this great work whose official opening has left us all an indelible memory. It was an extraordinary ceremony, favoured by the most beautiful weather, which has reached the climax when 15 locomotives adorned with flags and fir wreaths passed at the highest speed over the long bridge of over a thousand meters, in the rumble of the cannons, in the buzz of the sirens of the 16 ships of our Danubian fleet, in the sound of the national anthem and the cheers of the crowd. It was so exciting the moment that no one could talk. For me it was a moment of balance: a look at a rich past of struggles and full of difficulties and a look at a future where the bridge will open the country new sources of wealth, well-being and flourishing. I expressed these thoughts and feelings at the banquet, in the speech I held and where my words were repeatedly accompanied by resounding applause. The general mood was uplifting and each was pervaded by the significance of this successful work to which other magnificent buildings will be added: a bridge over one of the Danube branch and a big island. In the evening, at sunset, I made a trip on the Danube; the bridge ascended over us, and the trains passing through it looked like toys”<sup>77</sup>.

<sup>77</sup> S. Cristescu, *Carol I. Corespondența personală (1878-1912)*, Bucharest, 2005, p. 352, letter no. 234, 20 July/1 August 1895, to Queen Marie of Romania. “Podul de peste Dunăre care se apropie de terminare, va fi inaugurat festiv în a doua jumătate a lunii septembrie și mă bucur că vei putea asista la această frumoasă ceremonie”.

<sup>78</sup> *Scrisorile regelui Carol I din arhiva de la Sigmaringen (1878-1905)*, introductory study, translation, adaptation, and notes by Sorin Cristescu, Bucharest, 2012, p. 336, letter no. 197, 23 September/5 October 1895, to Princess Josephine. “Fără trudă și muncă nu există însă nici o răsplată și nici o mulțumire, or acestea mi-au fost acordate din plin la deschiderea podului peste Dunăre care astăzi se înalță ca un simbol al unei binecuvântate domnii de 30 de ani. Copleșitoare este această operă măreață a cărei inaugurare ne-a lăsat tuturor o amintire de neșters. A fost o ceremonie extraordinară, favorizată de cea mai frumoasă vreme, care a atins momentul culminant când 15 locomotive împodobite cu drapele și coroane de brad au trecut în cea mai mare viteză peste podul lung de peste o mie de metri, în bubuitul tunurilor, în șuierul sirenelor celor 16 nave din flotila noastră de Dunăre, în acordurile imnului național și în uralele mulțimii. A fost un moment așa de emoționant încât nimeni n-a mai putut scoate o vorbă. Pentru mine a reprezentat un moment de bilanț: o privire spre un trecut bogat în lupte și plin de greutate și o privire spre un viitor în care podul va deschide țării noi izvoare de bogăție, bunăstare și înflorire. Am dat expresie acestor gânduri și sentimente la banchet, în discursul pe care l-am ținut și unde cuvintele mele au fost însoțite în repetate rânduri de aplauze răsunătoare. Starea de spirit generală era înălțătoare și fiecare era pătruns de semnificația acestei opere încheiate cu succes la care se vor adăuga alte construcții mărețe: un pod peste unul din brațele Dunării și o insulă mare. Seara, la apusul soarelui, am făcut o călătorie pe Dunăre; podul se înalța colosal deasupra noastră, iar trenurile care treceau pe el păreau niște jucării”.

**Letter no. 08.**

“After eight days, here will arrive the first Orient Express<sup>79</sup> train from Ostend which will establish the direct link between London and Constantinople, passing our bridge over the Danube. The managers of the various railway stations through which the train will pass, shall participate in the first test journey and will be celebrated in Bucharest by the Romanian Railways Department. I’ll throw a lunch for them here. From now on, there will be two Orient Express per week, and from the spring three<sup>80</sup> .

**Letter no. 09.**

“The first train arrives today from Ostend to Bucharest, tomorrow I will be introduced to the railway managers of the different countries through which the train passes, and on Friday it goes to Constanța from where our ships will carry the passengers on to Constantinople from now. We have now two direct Eastern trains, which was the goal of my will<sup>81</sup> .

**Letter no. 10.**

“Our great bridge over the Danube has turned out to be extraordinary, every day five hundred wagons pass through it, all our grain exports. In winter we need to use this route; unfortunately, the Constanța port is insufficient<sup>82</sup> .

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<sup>79</sup> Previously, on 11/23 September 1895, the Romanian king “received the manager of the international trains on the matter of Orient [Express] in Constanța”, *Jurnal, Carol I al României*, vol. III, 1893-1897, p. 233.

<sup>80</sup> *Scrisorile regelui Carol I din arhiva de la Sigmaringen (1878-1905)*, introductory study, translation, adaptation, and notes by Sorin Cristescu, Bucharest, 2012, p. 340, letter no. 199, 26 October/7 November 1895, to Princess Josephine. “Peste opt zile va sosi aici primul tren Orient Expres de la Ostende care va stabili legătura directă între Londra și Constantinopol, trecând peste podul nostru peste Dunăre. Directorii diferitelor gări prin care trece trenul vor participa la prima călătorie de probă și vor fi sărbătoriți la București de Direcția Căilor Ferate Române. Eu le voi da un *lunch* aici. Din acest moment, vor trece pe aici două trenuri Orient Expres pe săptămână, iar de la primăvară câte trei”.

<sup>81</sup> S. Cristescu, *Carol I. Corespondența personală (1878-1912)*, Bucharest, 2005, p. 354, letter no. 237, 2/14 November 1895, to Marie of Flanders. „Astăzi sosește primul tren din Ostende la București, mâine mi se vor prezenta directorii căilor ferate din diferitele țări prin care trece acest tren, și vineri el se duce la Constanța de unde navele noastre îi vor transporta pe pasageri de acum înainte spre Constantinopol. Avem acum două trenuri orientale directe, ceea ce a fost țelul voinței mele”.

<sup>82</sup> *Scrisorile regelui Carol I din arhiva de la Sigmaringen (1878-1905)*, introductory study, translation, adaptation, and notes by Sorin Cristescu, Bucharest, 2012, p. 342, letter no. 201, 27 December 1895/8 January 1896, to Prince Leopold. „Marele nostru pod peste Dunăre se dovedește a fi extraordinar, zilnic trec peste el vreo cinci sute de vagoane, tot exportul nostru de cereale. În timpul iernii trebuie să folosim ruta aceasta; din păcate, portul Constanța este absolut insuficient”.

**b) Queen Marie.**

**Letter no. 11.**

“Charly<sup>83</sup> and Feo it seems are coming about the 20<sup>th</sup> [September at] the opening of the large Danube bridge on the 27<sup>th</sup> great festivities it will be rather fine”<sup>84</sup>.

**Letter no. 12.**

“I have not told you either about the festivities at the opening of the bridge which were very grand. We left Sinaia at 7 in the morning, dressed in our smart clothes in the train and arrived at the bridge at 1. Then began the festivities one after another, first Uncle<sup>85</sup> put in the finishing nail, then the last stone, then the religious service, then a train composed of 20 engines went across a bridge and then a train at full speed, oh! it did make a noise. Then came a huge banquet of 300 people, then we went on to a ship and steamed about under the bridge, it was already getting dark and there was a lovely sunset. It is the second largest bridge in Europe<sup>86</sup>.

We spent the night on the Danube ship and the next morning early we left the Constanța the harbor or sea-port or whatever it is. There of course tremendous reception. It is a very interesting part of the country as the population is a mixture of Greeks, Roumaniens, Jews, Bulgarians, and a great many Turks, one saw marvellous types at each nationality most amusing. We visited the churches of each and in each there was a service. In the afternoon of Friday we made a trip on the Roumanien ship, Elisabeta’ and the sea was as calm as a lake and as blue as a sapphire quite heavenly and most enjoyable. We visited the other Roumanien ships and an English ship quite an old one”<sup>87</sup>.

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<sup>83</sup> Duchess Charlotte of Saxe-Meiningen, and her daughter, Princess Feodora of Reuss; <http://www.almanachdegotha.org/id53.html>, 1 c and 1d; Charlotte was a constant presence during the reign of Carol I.

<sup>84</sup> D. Mandache, *Dearest Missy. The Letters of Marie Alexandrovna, Grand Duchess of Russia, Duchess of Edinburgh and her daughter, Princess Marie of Edinburgh, Crown Princess of Romania (1879-1900)*, Falköping, 2011, p. 230, 7 September 1895, letter to Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna.

<sup>85</sup> King Carol I.

<sup>86</sup> The longest bridge of Europe at that moment was the Forth Bridge (Scotland), inaugurated by the then Prince of Wales (future king Edward VII), in 1890, see ILN, no. 2655, 8 March 1890, cover, p. 291.

<sup>87</sup> D. Mandache, *Dearest Missy. The Letters of Marie Alexandrovna, Grand Duchess of Russia, Duchess of Edinburgh and her daughter, Princess Marie of Edinburgh, Crown Princess of Romania (1879-1900)*, Falköping, 2011, p. 237-238, 3 October 1895, letter to the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna; also, Marie mentions that Princes Leopold (her father-in-law) and Wilhelm (her brother-in-law) participated at festivities.

**Letter no. 13.**

In the letter of 14 October 1895, she announces that almost all the guests had left: Charlotte and Bernhard of Saxe-Meiningen, their daughter, Feodora, and Prince Leopold<sup>88</sup>.

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Independently, Queen Elisabeth wrote later that the festive opening was the greatest episode of the entire reign of Carol I<sup>89</sup>. To strengthen what Queen Elisabeth said, there comes the supposed statement of Carol I: “Saligny was one of my glories!”<sup>90</sup>.

Queen Marie, another Royal witness of the inauguration festivities, wrote in her “The Story of My Life” about the trips on the Danube, and Elisabeth’s enchantment occasioned by the picturesque sight of the bridge<sup>91</sup>.

**Conclusion**

One of the achievements of the Fives-Lille construction company was building the bridge over the Danube, in particularly difficult conditions. This project marked a milestone in the history of bridge construction techniques<sup>92</sup>.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, the fashion of being in attendance at openings as king or queen of the realm spread throughout Europe, whilst many bridges were fabricated and afterwards glitteringly inaugurated. This was a normal consequence of the global developing society and the achievement of high standards in the civil engineering spectrum.

Of course, this enthusiasm of driving in the last rivet is not encountered only in the case of the Romanian king, because we have many cases, like the Prince of Wales in 1890<sup>93</sup> and Franz Joseph in 1896<sup>94</sup>.

The Romanian bridge and the Forth Bridge are classified in the same type, namely “Cantilever truss bridge”.

Some similarity in performing the inauguration festivities of our bridge, are visible in the case of the Forth Bridge, where the Prince of Wales, during the

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<sup>88</sup> D. Mandache, *Dearest Missy. The Letters of Marie Alexandrovna, Grand Duchess of Russia, Duchess of Edinburgh and her daughter, Princess Marie of Edinburgh, Crown Princess of Romania (1879-1900)*, Falköping, 2011, p. 238, 14 October 1895, letter to the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna.

<sup>89</sup> Carmen Sylva, *Pe Dunăre: 27 aprilie – 3 mai 1904*, Bucharest, 1904, p. 47.

<sup>90</sup> See C. A. Dissescu, *Anghel Saligny*, in *Universul Literar*, year XLVI, no. 1-29, 1 January 1930, p. 35.

<sup>91</sup> See Appendix no. 4.

<sup>92</sup> [https://dk8mx37zdr9bp.cloudfront.net/corporate/PublishPaper/fives\\_200\\_years\\_of\\_industrial\\_revolutions/files/docs/all.pdf](https://dk8mx37zdr9bp.cloudfront.net/corporate/PublishPaper/fives_200_years_of_industrial_revolutions/files/docs/all.pdf), p. 18.

<sup>93</sup> ILN, no. 2655, 8 March 1890, p. 291-292.

<sup>94</sup> <https://reisewege-ungarn.de/7-bruecken-verkehrsadern-budapest/>

ceremony of opening, driven in a gilded last rivet. (Figs. 9-10a-b) The proceedings ended with a banquet. This immense structure was concluded in seven years and cost the staggering sum of £2,500,000, which means today £323,364,591.12<sup>95</sup>.

To exemplify more this way of festive opening, we have illustrated only a few examples of the abundant number of civil engineering structures marked by the presence of the state's highest officials<sup>96</sup>.

**Appendix no. 1.**

“We Carol I, by the grace of God and national will, king of Romania, in the Salvation year of 1890, I laid the first stone of the bridge meant to unite the two shores of the Danube, between Fetești and Cernavodă. After five years of constant work, God giving the country peace and abundance, today, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of September, in the Salvation year of 1895, and the 30<sup>th</sup> year of my rule, thanks to the zeal and the workmanship of the Romanian engineers, I crossed over the waves of the two arms of the stately Danube and I fixed the last rivet which concluded and finished these towering works, in attendance of HM the Queen, TRH the Prince and Princess of Romania, my beloved brother the Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, my nephew, HH the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern, HH the Hereditary Prince of Meiningen and HRH the Hereditary Princess of Saxe-Meiningen, the clergy, my ministers, the presidents and the members of the Parliament's offices, the accredited envoys of the foreign Powers, the chiefs of my army, the high dignitaries of the State and the technical staff.

Starting with today nothing separates Romania on the left part of the Danube from Dobroudja, which, through the bravery of our soldiers from the 1877 war, I united again with the fatherland. Thus, we can give this province and its ports on the seashore all our care, for their development and progress.

Proud, together with the whole Nation, that I raised a monument which does the glory of the Romanian people and who will be forever the powerful urge for our offsprings, to step further on the way of work, civilisation and enlargement. I signed this document of everlasting remembrance.

I have decided that after the consecration of the bridge, officiated by the Metropolitan Primate, one copy to be placed in the masonry on the Danube's right shore, together with the copy of the document which was put in the masonry on the left shore's pillar and the second one to be stored in the State Archives”<sup>97</sup>.

**Appendix no. 2.**

“The establishment of this bridge was voted by the Legislatures in 1885, President of the Council of Ministers being Ion C. Brătianu. Its construction,

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<sup>95</sup> ILN, no. 2655, 8 March 1890, p. 291; <https://www.in2013dollars.com/uk/inflation/1890?amount=2500000>

<sup>96</sup> See Appendix no. 5.

<sup>97</sup> MO, no. 134, Sunday, 17/29 September 1895, p. 4474-4475; N. Șt. Noica, *Lucrări publice din vremea lui Carol I. Acte de fundare și medalii comemorative*, Bucharest, 2008, p. 32.

decided in 1889, began in 1890 and finished in 1895, Presidents of the Council of Ministers being General Gheorghe Manu and Lascăr Catargiu, and Ministers of Public Works Alexandru Lahovari, Alexandru Marghiloman, and Constantin Olănescu. The works have been executed by the General Department of the Romanian Railway through Fives-Lille Company from France, manager of the Romanian Railway being Gheorghe I. Duca, and the project's Author and manager of the works Anghel Saligny”.

**Appendix no. 3.**

“Gathered here, on Dobroudja's shore, forever united through our valiant blood and again connected through an iron chain with Romania, we celebrate an event expected with eagerness by the whole country, which will find an echo, far away, beyond its boundaries. The execution of the bridge over the Danube, wanted for a quarter of the century by me, is today a fulfilled fact, and this stately work rises giantlike before us as an evident testimony of the strength of the kingdom. The human genius, in which are reflected the progress and the powerful impetus of Romania, conquered all the difficulties, removed all the obstacles to accomplish this lasting and unfading work, which must show the world that worthy is the Romanian people of its beautiful calling at the mouth of the Danube and the gates of the Orient.

Monuments are the vivid history of the people; until today the traces of Trajan have not been deleted. Who does not speak of his bridge in Severin? May God allow that the second bridge, erected after thousands of years at the Lower Danube, live centuries to narrate to the future generations that only by sacrifice, battles and steadfast work, the Romanian state could be founded.

I can be proud that under my rule this grandiose bridge it was ideated and finished, by our engineers, which will attract a significant part of the European trade on our railroads, for today we own the shortest line between the Northern seas and the countries from the East.

We look now further to the sea, on this boundless waterway, where countless roads of the entire world cross, which spread riches over the nations. Through the port of Constanța, the bridge over the Danube open us this Broadway, which will increase in an unexpected mode our commercial relationships and it will assure our maritime development. The Romanian standard which is already known in Europe's ports, will flutter before long even in the remotest countries of the Universe, carrying the fame of our beloved fatherland.

With my joyful heart, I express this belief in front of the stately gathering, in front of our giant bridge, which I view as the golden key of a bright future, warmly thank you all who have contributed in the great victory which is celebrated today by us with so much satisfaction.

I also thank for the heartfelt speeches, so flattering for myself; I thank the technical staff for the zeal and the diligence with which it has carried out the numerous public works, realized in the last years which found their beautiful coronation in the bridge over the Danube.

I am happy because the distinguished guests and honourable gentlemen, all of you are the witnesses of this memorable day which means a new age in our economic life and I'm sure that you will unite with me in the wish of: Long live our beloved Romania, whose impetus nobody can stop in the way of magnification and progress!"

**Appendix no. 4.**

"The culminating phase of excitement was reached when from afar the visions of the beautiful Cernavoda bridge would appear painted against the horizon, looming larger and larger as the yacht approached and finally steamed under its vast arches. Aunty<sup>98</sup> would then sing veritable hymns of praise, for this mighty bridge had been one of the big achievements of King Carol's reign, a dream he had steadily worked towards during his early struggle-filled years; for with this bridge over the Danube he connected the Dobrogea and the Black Sea with the rest of the country and also with Western Europe, thereby drawing much traffic and commerce down towards Roumania and her only sea-port, Constantza"<sup>99</sup>.

**Appendix no. 5.**

**Selective list:**

**001** Canada. **Official opening:** 25 August 1860; **name:** Victoria Bridge; **where:** Montreal; **presided by:** Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII)<sup>100</sup>.

**002** The Austro-Hungarian Empire. **Official opening:** 13 May 1868; **name:** Franz Joseph Bridge; **where:** Prague; **presided by:** Emperor Franz Joseph I<sup>101</sup>.

**003** Great Britain. **Official opening:** 4 March 1890; **name:** Forth Bridge; **where:** Scotland; **presided by:** Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII)<sup>102</sup>.

**004** The Austro-Hungarian Empire. **Official opening:** 4 October 1896; **name:** Freedom Bridge; **where:** Budapest; **presided by:** Emperor Franz Joseph I<sup>103</sup>.

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<sup>98</sup> Queen Elisabeth of Romania.

<sup>99</sup> <https://archive.org/details/storyofmylifebym00mari/page/538/mode/2up>, p. 538-539.

<sup>100</sup> Accompanied (among others) by Prince George of Wales (future George V) and Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh; ILN, no. 2655, 8 March 1890, p. 291; <https://structurae.net/en/structures/victoria-bridge>

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMX9QE> Franz Joseph Bridge Prague Czech Republic; <https://structurae.net/structures/bridge-over-the-moldau>

<sup>102</sup> ILN, no. 2655, 8 March 1890, cover, p. 291; <https://structurae.net/structures/forth-rail-bridge>

<sup>103</sup> <https://ungarnheute.hu/news/der-standard-freiheitsbruecke-von-budapest-unter-den-schoensten-bruecken-der-welt-26358/>; <https://reisewege-ungarn.de/7-bruecken-verkehrsadern-budapest/>; <https://structurae.net/structures/freedom-bridge>

**005** Russia. **Official opening:** 1903; **name:** The Trinity Bridge; **where:** St. Petersburg; **presided by:** Tsar Nicholas II<sup>104</sup>.

**006** Great Britain. **Official opening:** 10 October 1928; **name:** Tyne Bridge; **where:** North East England; **presided by:** King George V<sup>105</sup>.

**007** Belgium. **Official opening:** 9 June 1956; **name:** King Baudouin Bridge; **where:** Huy (Walloon Region); **presided by:** King Baudouin<sup>106</sup>.

**008** Luxembourg. **Official opening:** 24 October 1966; **name:** Grand Duchess Charlotte Bridge; **where:** Luxembourg City; **presided by:** Grand Duke Jean<sup>107</sup>.

**009** Great Britain. **Official opening:** 16 March 1973; **name:** London bridge; **where:** London; **presided by:** Queen Elizabeth II<sup>108</sup>.

**010** Denmark and Sweden. **Official opening:** 1 July 2000; **name:** Øresund Bridge; **where:** over the Øresund Strait; **presided by:** Queen Margrethe II and King Carl XVI Gustaf<sup>109</sup>.

**011** Great Britain. **Official opening:** 4 September 2017; **name:** Queensferry Crossing; **where:** Scotland; **presided by:** Queen Elizabeth II<sup>110</sup>.

**012** Great Britain. **Official opening:** 14 June 2018; **name:** Mersey Gateway Bridge; **where:** North West England; **presided by:** Queen Elizabeth II<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>104</sup> [https://www.rbth.com/arts/2017/08/15/5-reasons-why-you-must-see-st-petersburgs-most-extraordinary-bridge\\_822760](https://www.rbth.com/arts/2017/08/15/5-reasons-why-you-must-see-st-petersburgs-most-extraordinary-bridge_822760); <https://structurae.net/en/structures/trinity-bridge-1903>

<sup>105</sup> <https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/local-news/85-years-tyne-bridge-bridge-1724342>; <https://structurae.net/structures/tyne-bridge>

<sup>106</sup> <http://www.huy.be/loisirs/tourisme/huy-tourisme/decouvrir-huy/monuments-et-patrimoine-historiques/ponts-de-huy/pont-roi-baudouin>; <https://structurae.info/ouvrages/pont-roi-baudouin>

<sup>107</sup> [https://www.cvce.eu/obj/allocution\\_de\\_pierre\\_werner\\_lors\\_de\\_l\\_inauguration\\_du\\_monument\\_robert\\_schuman\\_du\\_pont\\_grande\\_duchesse\\_charlotte\\_et\\_du\\_centre\\_europeen\\_luxembourg\\_24\\_octobre\\_1966-fr-ca9dae27-2e47-4b68-bb9e-89e0bcf6e0a4.html](https://www.cvce.eu/obj/allocution_de_pierre_werner_lors_de_l_inauguration_du_monument_robert_schuman_du_pont_grande_duchesse_charlotte_et_du_centre_europeen_luxembourg_24_octobre_1966-fr-ca9dae27-2e47-4b68-bb9e-89e0bcf6e0a4.html); <https://structurae.net/structures/grand-duchess-charlotte-bridge>

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/03/17/archives/queen-opens-new-london-bridge.html>; <https://structurae.net/structures/london-bridge-1973>

<sup>109</sup> Accompanied by Prince Consort Henrik and, respectively, Queen Silvia; <http://www.gettyimages.co.nz/detail/news-photo/the-danish-royal-family-welcome-the-king-and-queen-of-sweden-for-the-picture-id525512690#the-danish-royal-family-welcome-the-king-and-queen-of-sweden-for-the-picture-id525512690>; <https://structurae.net/structures/oresund-bridge>

<sup>110</sup> <https://www.royal.uk/queen-opens-new-queensferry-crossing>; <https://structurae.net/structures/queensferry-crossing>

<sup>111</sup> Accompanied by the Duchess of Sussex; <http://www.merseygateway.co.uk/2018/06/her-majesty-the-queen-and-her-royal-highness-the-duchess-of-sussex-visit-halton-to->

**Abbreviations**

ILN – *The Illustrated London News*, London.

MO – *Monitorul Oficial*, Bucharest.

NAR – The National Archives of Romania, Bucharest/ANR – Arhivele Naționale ale României, București.

NHMR – The National History Museum of Romania, Bucharest/MNIR – Muzeul Național de Istorie a României, București.

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[officially-open-the-mersey-gateway-bridge/;](https://www.merseygateway.com/officially-open-the-mersey-gateway-bridge/) <https://structurae.net/structures/mersey-gateway>



Fig. 1 – Photo of the „King Carol I” Bridge, during the construction phase, NHMR, inv. no. 378821. Photo: Anatole Magrin

Fig. 1 – Fotografie a podului „Regele Carol I” din timpul construcției, MNIR, inv. 378821. Fotografie: Anatole Magrin

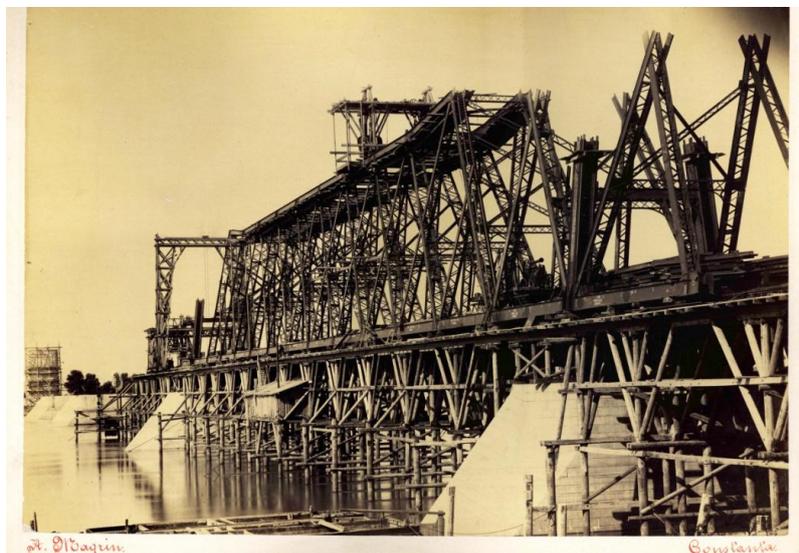


Fig. 2 – Photo of the „King Carol I” Bridge, during the construction phase, NHMR, inv. no. 378822. Photo: Anatole Magrin

Fig. 2 – Fotografie a podului „Regele Carol I”, din timpul construcției, MNIR, inv. 378822. Fotografie: Anatole Magrin



Fig. 3 – Photo made in 1906 during an official visit. Information Eng. Mircea Dorobantu, director CENAFER - The Railway Museum (Bucharest)  
Fig. 3 – Fotografie realizată în 1906 în timpul unei vizite oficiale. Informație oferită de Ing. Mircea Dorobanțu, directorul CENAFER – Muzeul Căilor Ferate (București)

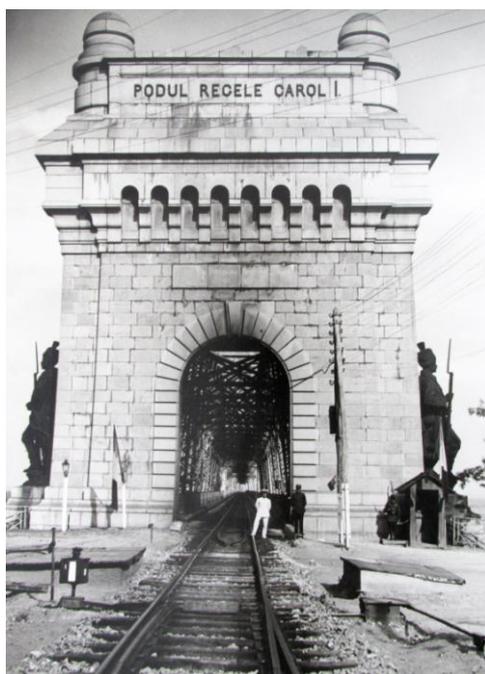


Fig. 4 - The Dobrudjan portal of the 'King Carol I' Bridge; NAR, Collection of Photographic Documents, II 592/1  
Fig. 4 – Portalul dobrogean al podului "Regele Carol I"; ANR, Colecția de documente fotografice, II 592/1

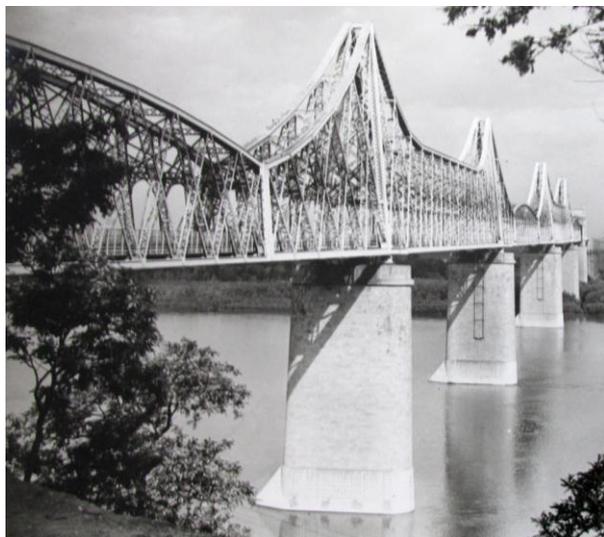


Fig. 5 – View of the bridge from the Dobrudjan shore; NAR,  
Collection of Photographic Documents, II 592/2  
Fig. 5 – Vedere a podului de pe malul dobrogean; ANR,  
Colecția de documente fotografice, II 592/2



Fig. 6 – The ‘Starke & Rommerer’ theodolite, 4930 series,  
Polytechnic University Museum (Bucharest)  
Fig. 6 – Teodolitul “Starke & Rommerer”, seria 4930,  
Muzeul Universității Politehnice (București)

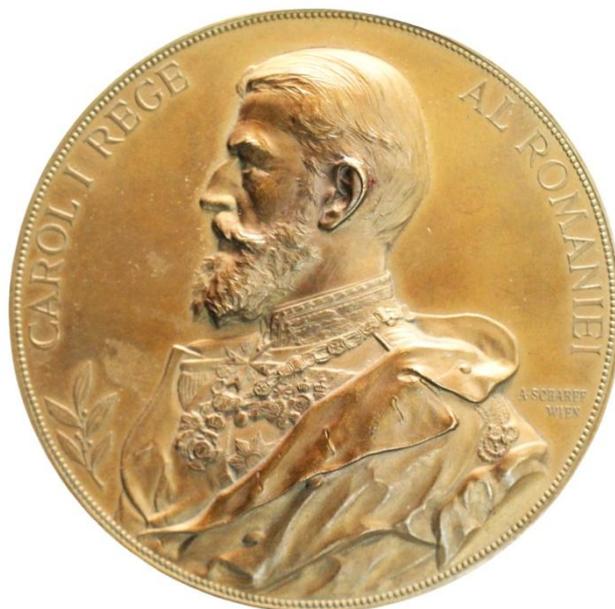


Fig. 7a-b – The inauguration medal; medalist: Anton Scharff; bronze; NHMR, inv. no. 322940. Photo: Tudor Al. Martin

Fig. 7a-b – Medalie care marchează momentul inaugurării; medalist: Anton Scharff; bronz; MNIR, inv. 322940. Fotografie: Tudor Al. Martin



Fig. 8 – Menu, cardboard, NHMR, inv. no. 142194. Photo: Marius Amarie  
 Fig. 8 – Meniu, carton, MNIR, inv. 142194. Fotografie: Marius Amarie

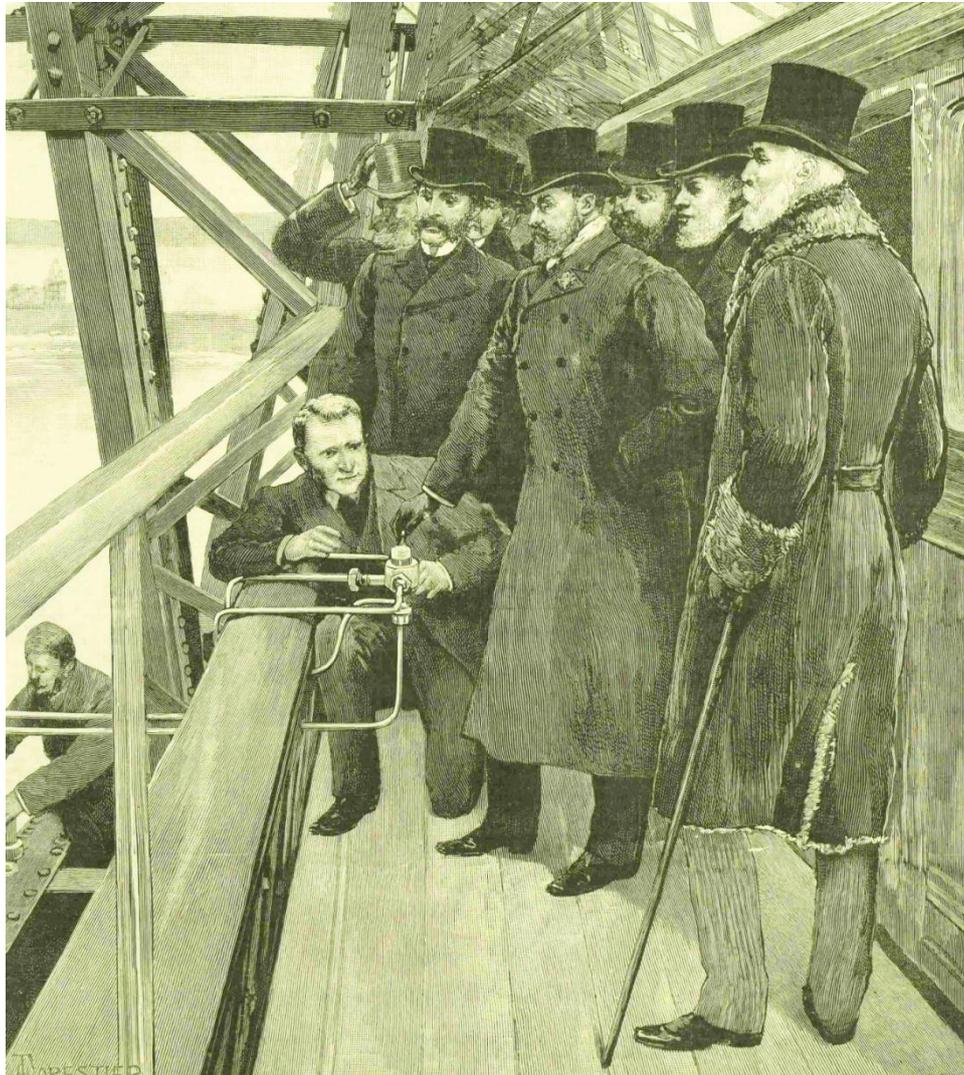


Fig. 9 – The Prince of Wales driving in the last rivet of the Forth Bridge, *apud* ILN, no. 2655, 8 March 1890, sketch by Amédée Forestier, cover  
Fig. 9 – Principele de Wales fixând ultimul nit al podului Forth, *apud* ILN, nr. 2655, 8 Martie 1890, schiță de Amédée Forestier, copertă

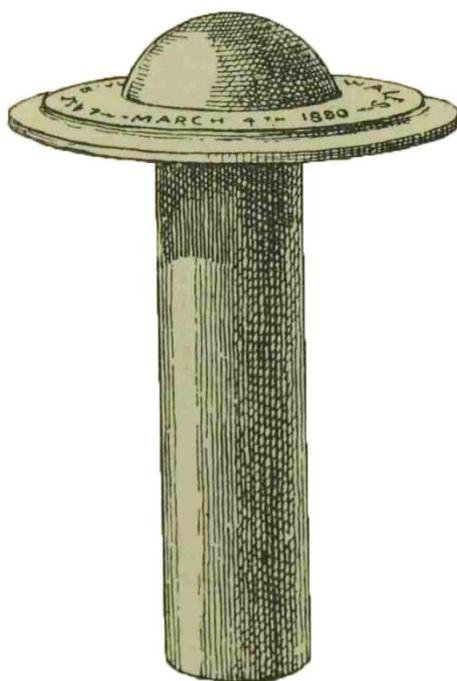
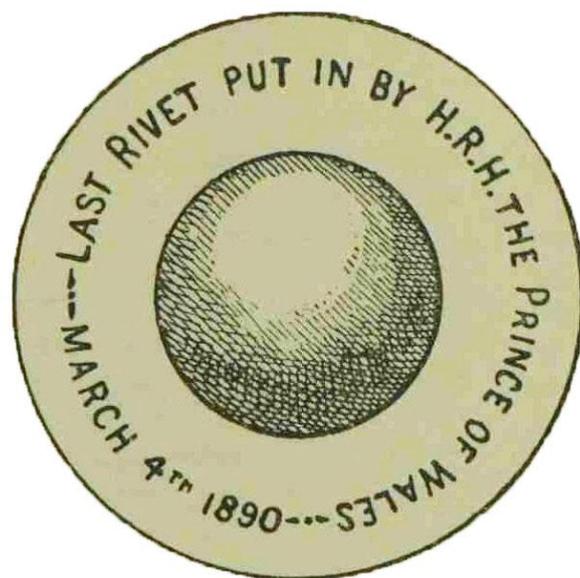


Fig. 10a-b – The last rivet used at the Forth Bridge, *apud* ILN, no. 2655, 8 March 1890, p. 291

Fig. 10a-b – Ultimul nit folosit la podul Forth, *apud* ILN, nr. 2655, 8 Martie 1890, p. 291